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Abraham Lincoln Visited Iowa

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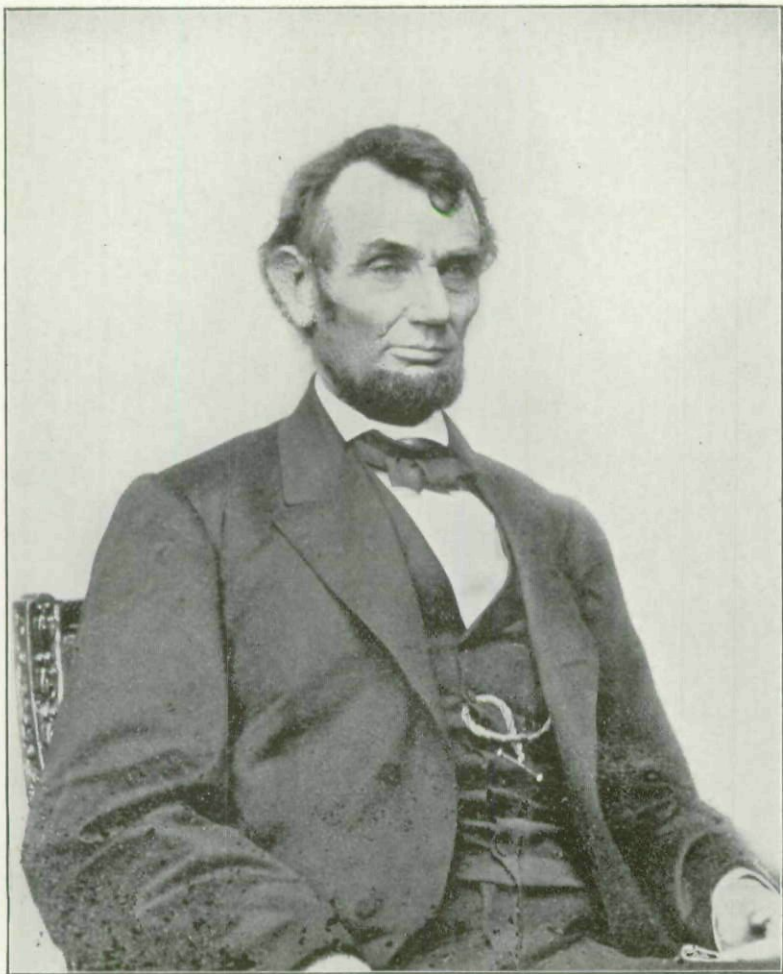
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few of his signatures. Beyond these meager memorabilia of the plucky old Governor, little else is in existence. He should have left a large quantity of letters and papers, but if he did they have disappeared. We regard it as most fortunate that THE ANNALS is able to publish this very interesting and valuable sketch by Mr. Parvin who knew him so long and so well. The illustrations are most pertinent to the subject in hand, including as they do good portraits of Governor Lucas and Mr. Parvin, a cut of the old Zion Church in Burlington, where the first Territorial Legislature held its sessions, with a view from a recent photograph of the monument which stands over the grave of Governor Lucas. Little further can now be done to perpetuate the memory or render justice to the merits of the Christian gentleman, the brave soldier, and the illustrious pioneer Executive.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN VISITED IOWA.

Knowledge of this fact had quite faded out of the general recollection when several parties recently undertook to ascertain the truth in regard to it. There was a vague impression in the minds of some of our older people that the Martyr-President had crossed the Mississippi, and either appeared in some court as a lawyer, or had addressed one or more political assemblages. But in the multiplicity of stupendous events which followed later on, whatever was true in regard to his coming into Iowa had been forgotten. It would seem from a letter by Mr. Lincoln to Hon. Hawkins Taylor, that he was once expected to visit Keokuk, but did not come. Taylor was a politician of considerable note in early Iowa—Mayor of Keokuk and a member of our first territorial legislature. He died two years ago in Washington, D. C. Under date of September



ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

This engraving is from Col. D. M. Fox's "History of Political Parties," the original photograph having been furnished for that work by Hon. Robert T. Lincoln.

6, 1859, in a letter to Mr. Taylor, Mr. Lincoln wrote: "There is some mistake about my expected attendance of the United States Court in your city on the third Tuesday of this month. I have no thought of being there. It is bad to be poor. I shall go to the wall for bread and meat, if I neglect my business this year as well as last. It would please me much to see the city and good people of Keokuk, but for this year it is little less than an impossibility." Dr. J. M. Shaffer of Keokuk has taken some pains to look this matter up locally, but his investigations do not show that President Lincoln was ever in Keokuk. He visited Carthage, the capital of Hancock county, Illinois, fifteen miles east of Keokuk, during his famous campaign for the United States Senatorship, in 1858, in which he was defeated by Stephen A. Douglas. He addressed the people upon the issues of the day, of which the slavery question was the one prominent and all-absorbing, and out of which grew the great civil war of 1861-65.

But the question was asked Dr. William Salter of Burlington, who wrote: "I heard Mr. Lincoln speak in Grimes' Hall in this city, October 9, 1858. It was in the midst of his Douglas campaign. You will see a notice of it in the enclosed program of a commemoration of Lincoln's 75th birthday in the Congregational Church of this city." Speaking of this meeting two days later Clark Dunham, the distinguished war-editor of *The Burlington Hawkeye*, said of Mr. Lincoln: "He appeared fresh and vigorous. There was nothing in his voice, manner or appearance, to show that the immense labors of the canvass of the last two months had worn upon him in the least. His discourse was logical, replete with sound argument, concise, earnest, impassioned and eloquent." This important question is therefore settled. It is a proud fact in the history of Burlington that she was honored with a visit from the greatest of our Presidents.

"Fairer seems the ancient city, and the sunshine seems more fair,
That he once has trod its pavements, that he once has breathed
its air."

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